ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system and method are disclosed for controlling the flow of a dialog within a spoken

dialog service dialog management module. The method uses a dialog disambiguation

rooted tree, the rooted tree having a root node, nodes descending from the root nodes

organized in categories and leaf nodes. The method comprises gathering input from a

user to match with at least one node and node condition, wherein a first prompt from

the dialog manager relates to a focus root node, lighting at least one relevant node

according to the received user input, generalizing by attempting to select a new focus

node further from a current focus node by: (1) assigning a node as a new focus node if it

is the only lit direct descendent of a focus node after the lighting step; and (2) assigning a

lowest common ancestor node as a new focus node if there are multiple descendent

nodes that are lit and the step of assigning a new node a new focus if it is the only lit

direct descendent does not apply. This method enables improved disambiguation of user

intent in a spoken dialog service.